1: Raswan T-3 (1913-35) 1947 MD4 Rwala MD4

721 circled about us with rifles ready for action. Then they got out of their cars and advanced towards us, with their rifles cocked.

As they approached, they yelled out that we were spies who had come to reconnoitre their land and camps. One of them recognized the wounded Duleym and began to question him, but the man remained silent, except to say that he would speak only before the *sheykh*. I overheard a few words which clearly showed that we stood in danger of immediate death. I thought it wise at least to warn their Akid.

"We are in Syria. Not only Ibn Meheyd, but also the Fransawi (French) will hold thee answerable for our safety!"

"Then prove thy friendly intentions," he answered.

I proposed that we should accompany him and his men to their camp.

He accepted my proposal only after we had handed over our rifles; our pistols we were allowed to retain.

619 [361] Following our enemies, we drove in a northeasterly direction. After a few miles we met the first herdsmen and their flocks and herds, and half an hour later the great camp of the allied Fid'an, Saba and Amarat Bedouins came in sight—tent ranged by tent in vast array. All the while new families with pack-camels came in and took their places on the wide plain, while women and slaves hastened to raise the black tents.

• 769 [623] A young acquaintance of Berjas ibn Hedeyb rode up to us and recognized me. He accompanied us to the large council tent of the assembled *shiyukhs*, and on the way related that a few days earlier some Fid'an had

l: Raswan T-3 (1913-35) 1947 MD4 Rwala MD4

visited the grave of the old Hero-Chief, Turki ibn Meheyd, at Aklat Suab. 769

As an offering to the memory of his forebear (Turki was killed in battle against the Ruala, although his daughter Turkiyye was married to the Ruala chieftain, Sattam ibn Sha'lan) Ibn Meheyd had sacrificed a fat camel over the grave: "So that Allah might read his heart and give him victory over the Ruala." This is a heathen, pre-Islamic custom of the Arabian Bedouins.

It would seem that Ibn Meheyd and his vassals had made not only material, but also spiritual preparations for a decisive war against the Ruala. 619 721

Our enemies were now assembled, and the conference of the chiefs was in full swing when we arrived.

Ibn Meheyd looked aged and the bitterness of his thoughts had hardened his features. This unpleasing impression was deepened by his beard and eyebrows, which he had dyed black. [302]

A thick woollen shawl enveloped his head and throat, despite the warm sunny day. He had been a sufferer for years from a wasting fever which he, like so many other Fid'an Bedouins, had contracted in the unhealthy lowlands of the Euphrates. [164]

On our appearance Ibn Meheyd had risen and taken a step forward, but on recognizing the familiar faces of his enemies, he turned back and beckoned to the leader of his Negro bodyguard. Even to me he had not given the customary salute, but only swept me with a black look. Fortunately, I perceived at once that we had put our heads into a hornet's nest, and I whispered to my 619 721 576

2:Musil S-4, 5 (no date)1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

The maiden longs for a word from her lover, who has gone with some traders in camels to Egypt, and urges the messenger carrying letters for the chief to hurry.

Zâ'û min al-'ejd w-mežfini
w-mnaššerin ad-dallâli
'allemi bihom bel-maḳâṭini
w-mrakkezin al-maḳâmi.

After the holiday they departed, but in the opposite
Their best clothes donning. [direction,
Let me hear of their news, that they have encamped
And have erected a water hoist. [to stay

The maiden learns where her lover's kin have encamped. *Al-'ejd* is the holiday of *aẓ-ẓaḥijje*, when a she-camel is sacrificed by the Bedouins to every member of their kin who has died in the past year. *Mežfin* means that they have not followed the other Arabs in their forward movement but have taken the opposite direction. They encamped by a watering place and for a long period, hence *maḳâṭini*. The word *meḳṭân* designates a place where the Bedouins make a prolonged stay in summer time; thus *ḳaṭanna 'ala-l-ḳâra* means "we camped a long time in al-Ḳâra." *Maḳâm* is the wooden apparatus for raising water, fastened above the edge of a deep well (see my *Arabia Deserta*, Fig. 35, p. 161). Such an apparatus is arranged only when the Arabs intend to stay at that particular well for some time. On that occasion they take out their best clothes and the women dress in their finest, *munaššerin ad-dallâl*.

Ed'û râ'i-š-šowše
an-nûri mâ ḥala' howšeh
jâ mušarreden lar-radi bowšeh
jâ howš at-turk jâ howšeh.

Wish long life to him with the short hair,
To an-Nûri — Oh, how graceful is he in the fight,
He who frees the herds captured by a wretch!
Ah, the fight with the Turks, ah, his fight with them!

Ed'û for *jâ ṭawil al-'omr*. When going to battle every rider bares his head. The kerchief rests on his shoulders; the weight of the head rope hanging round the neck holds it to the body. *Šowše* means short, unbraided hair on the

2:Musil S-4, 5 (no date)1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

hang the cradle, *rûǧâḥa*, which is made of a quilted cover and has a rope tied to its four corners, high up to the tent poles. If, then, *as-sar'a* comes into the tent, she looks for the child on the beds made on the floor and takes no notice of the cradle hanging from above.

Another evil spirit appears in the shape of a big greyhound bitch, *seleḳa*, with an enormous jaw and a breastbone, *zowr*, reaching to the ground. This spirit, known as *sa'aluwwa*, is the only spirit which appears in the wide level desert and lives in dens such as are used by the hyenas. A traveler, *ṭurḳi*, a member of the Mseke kin which belongs to the 'Ebede division, once met what he thought to be a *seleḳa* in the desert. He made it come to him, believing that it might lead him to the camp it had left. But instead of being a *seleḳa*, it proved to be a *sa'aluwwa* who jumped at him, tore flesh from his breast and face, sucked his blood, and did not leave him till he was half dead. When finally found by other travelers, all he could do was to tell what had happened to him before departing this life, *râḥ*.

A *ḳurṭa* or *ḳârûẓ* is a spirit who destroys newly born boys but does his work unobserved. If a Rwejli is married to a woman who has borne him several boys all of whom have died after a short time, and if the same thing happens also with the second wife, then he knows for certain that it is a *ḳurṭa* who has done him this wrong. To appease the spirit he procures a cock with green feathers on its neck and waits until his wife comes to childbed again. When her time is near, with the live cock he draws in his tent seven circles, one within the other, kills the cock in the seventh in the center, buries it there, and lays his wife over that spot. She will then bear without any pain, and her son will not die, because the *ḳurṭa* has been given what belonged to it, *ḥaḳḳ al-ḳârûẓ*.

REVERENCE FOR GRAVES RARE AMONG BEDOUINS

The Bedouins know of no communion with the saints. In the whole inner desert there is not a single holy grave or shrine erected in honor of a saint. In fact they have no saints whatever. When they make their short sojourns in the settled territory, where by every village the dome of a shrine rises above the real or imaginary grave of some man or woman

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whom public opinion considers to be a saint, they never pay attention to these domes. In their opinion the latter commemorate the saints of the settlers and breeders of goats and sheep, *ri'* or *šwâja*, not of the Bedouins. They say: "They are not of our kin, *ahl*, not of us, *ǧemâ'atna*, therefore we do not honor them or go on pilgrimage to them, *ḥenna alli mâ hw minna mâ nezûreh*."

Worship of the saints has never been known among the Rwala and presumably never will be. The hereafter does not trouble the Bedouins much, and their idea of it is only hazy; nor have they any permanent burying places, *meǧenne*, but bury their dead wherever death overtakes them. They therefore do not know and never visit individual graves. This is often due to the great distance between their pastures; to some of their camping grounds they return only after many years — so why should they care for a grave? They do not know even where the graves of their older princes or head chiefs are. I have heard from many Rwala, even from members of the reigning kin, that Nâjef eben Ša'lân, one of their ancestors, lies buried between the rain pools of Haǧm and al-Bark in al-Ḥamâd and that a camel is sacrificed by his descendants whenever they come there, as they do once in many years. Yet while we camped in that place in 1914 and took our drinking water from both the pools, not a single member of the reigning house thought for a moment of sacrificing the camel on Nâjef's grave. Hazzâ', Prince an-Nûri's father, died at al-Ǧubejlijje in the Ḥawrân and was buried there, but his grave has never been visited by an-Nûri, although he often marches past the place.

Slejmân eben Meršed, one of the ancestors of the reigning family of the Sba'a tribe, died and was buried at Dejr az-Zôr on the right bank of the Euphrates. The merchants of that town, with whom he was always on friendly terms, had a small dome erected over his grave. It is said that whenever the members of his kin come there they sacrifice a camel by the dome, saying: "We think of thee, Slejmân; Oh, mayst thou have pity on us and our parents!" after which they besmear the tombstone with the blood of the sacrificed animal, *jeḫaṭṭeṭûn naṣîbeh*. But Blejhân, a subject of Eben Meršed, stated that the camels are killed there by merchants from Dejr az-Zôr and not by any Bedouins. Bṭejjen eben Midbaṛ eben Meršed was buried at the mouth of the valley of al-Arḳaṭ. His

2:Musil S-4, 5 (no date)1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

grave is marked with a few tall, flat stones placed upright, 769 ● *naṣâjeb*.

All the raiders and robbers of the northern ʿAneze honor the grave of Turki eben Mhejd, head chief of the Fedʿân tribe. Turki undertook countless raids and returned from them all unhurt and with much booty. Once in the *al-ḳêẓ* season (midsummer) he rode against the Šammar, the subjects of Eben Rašîd, who were camping on the southeast border of the Nefûd. The water supply of the raiders being exhausted, they wished to fill their bags and also to water their camels from the al-Ḥaẓra' wells. Their scouts, *ʿujûn*, however, sent out in advance to examine the country and to find the best and safest watering places and pastures, came back with the news that the neighborhood of al-Ḥaẓra was full of Šammar camps in such numbers that Turki's troop would be unable to cope with them. Turki wished, then, to circumvent al-Ḥaẓra and attack one of the smaller camps south of it, but the thirst tormenting both the men and animals was already becoming insufferable. It was in vain that Turki asked his comrades to be patient, in vain that he promised that they would find water very soon; the tortures of thirst increased with every mention of water, and they all well knew that there was no well anywhere near. When the distress was at its height Turki prayed to Allâh to send them rain. His wish was granted. Allâh sent from the northwest a dark cloud which he caused to halt above their heads and pour forth all its water. The rain that now fell on Turki and his troop was so abundant that they could fill their water bags from several rain pools, quench their thirst, and water their camels. Thus strengthened in their belief that Allâh was on their side, they fell upon the Šammar herds and returned home with rich booty. From that time Turki was called The Little Son of his Lord, *wlejd rabbeh*, because Allâh, moved by the supplication of such a little son, had brought the rain cloud to their rescue in the season of *al-ḳêẓ*, during which it never rains in the desert.

In the time of abundance, *rabîʿ*, of 1887 Turki had his camp at the junction of the *šeʿîb* of al-Heri with the aṣ-Ṣwâb valley. There he was attacked by the Rwala, defeated, killed, and buried beside his tent. The Fedʿân raised a tall stone above his grave and carved it with the emblems of all their clans and kins. All raiders, when passing by, stop at the grave and form a circle round it, whereupon the commander speaks as

2:Musil S-4, 5 (no date) 1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

769 follows: "O thou who hast protected our herds called 'Alja! By the success which Allâh and thou grant! If Allâh will lead us to glory and liberate us, thou wilt receive a fat she-camel. *Jâ râ'i-l-'alja bsa'ûd allâh wa-s'ûdak en allâh nowmasna w-fakkna lak ğezûren.*" On their return with booty they make a fat camel kneel down, cut her throat so that the blood sprinkles the tombstone, and shout: "This is thy supper, O protector of the 'Alja herds!"

My companion, Blejhân, related: "I rode out for plunder with only one comrade. Not far from Turki's grave we made our camels kneel and went to the grave. Laying our right hands on the tombstone, *naṣîba*, we said: 'O thou protector of the 'Alja! If we return with booty, thou wilt receive a fat she-camel.' Soon afterwards we noticed a caravan, *žâfla*, on the road Darb as-Sâ'i which leads from Damascus to Hît and Bagdad. Crawling near to it at night we captured six she-camels, one of which we sacrificed to Turki. The entrails we ate at the grave, the flesh and the hide we carried home. Our camp was then in the upper part of the al-Mijâh valley.

"Not long after this a certain Mzahlak of the Weld Slîmân [*sic*] rode in command of a raiding troop past Turki's grave. Stopping his camel, he exlaimed: 'O thou protector of the 'Alja! If by thy help we return with booty, thou wilt receive a fat camel: *jâ râ'i-l-'alja en afadna bsa'ûdak lak ğezûren.* They captured a large herd, killed a camel on his grave, roasted and ate its flesh, and brought the hide home."

Whenever the Fed'ân encamp near Turki's grave they kill a camel in his honor but not until they wish to move to the settled territory, *elja ṛarrabow*. To the feast not only the Fed'ân but also the Sba'a and 'Amârât are invited, because Turki was related by blood to all the tribes acknowledging Bišr as their common ancestor, *ẓana bišr*.

VOWS

782 All Rwala believe that they can win Allâh's favor by a vow. Not that Allâh would desire or need the promised object, but it rejoices him to see that the Bedouins remember in time that without his help they cannot attain what they desire, and also that they show willingness to give up something of value in order to assure themselves of his help. Such vows are made by all, men as well as women, old as well as young,

2:Musil S-4, 5 (no date)1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

726x
539x

7. *teḥazzebû w-ṣirû erğâlen efhûmi*
   w-al-ʿadw mâ jisla miṯl al-ḥajâja
8. *waʿ ḫowfeti jinḳâl râḥaw lehûmi*
   ʿejâl šâlûhom biẓhûr as-sebâja.

1. The new moon has appeared, the tale is told,
   And clear to us now is all their talk.
2. Begone! Ill have ye acted, O avengers,
   What excuse have ye that ye comfort not those eagerly [waiting?
3. I see birds of prey circling above you,
   Longing to have the big and fat among you for supper.
4. Cut with the sharp edge of the blade before it becomes dull,
   Before your foes make of you sacrifices for their dead.
5. Mourning over you are the fair ones, adorned with tattooing,
   For ye are their veil; they must not remain naked.
6. Ah, woe to you, if ye reject my tidings,
   By Allâh! ye all will be sacrificed for the dead.
7. Take counsel together and become prudent;
   For an enemy cannot be struck like snakes.
8. Ah, how I fear that it will be said: Our foes killed them
   And loaded their children on the backs of the captured animals.

This poem was composed by a daughter of one Ḥeğlân of the Duṛmân clan. Two kins of the latter clan quarreled. One of them remained in the Rwala territory, the other under the chief Ḥeğlân emigrated to the Šammar. An attack made on them by their kinsfolk was repulsed, but the chief Ḥeğlân fell. The raiders were pursued but without success. Ḥeğlân had no sons. His daughter urged her kin to revenge the slain chief and was promised that they would make a raid in retaliation, but they put it off from one day to another. Finally they assured her that the raid would be carried out with the appearance of the new moon. Yet when it appeared the avengers stayed at home. The girl then composed this poem. The reciters were ʿAwde al-Kwêčbi and Mindîl al-Ḳaṭʿi.

Verse 2. *Reḥûmi* are vultures which feed only on dead bodies. 4. The Bedouins dedicated even before Mohammed's time a certain day of the year to the memory of the dead, and on this day they sacrifice for every person who has died in the past year either a she-camel or a goat. This sacrifice is called zabîse. [769]